

CITY OF PROSPECT HEIGHTS
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
October 12, 2023

Present: Pete Hahn Jill Moskal, Recording Secretary
 John Kamysz Dana Sievertson
 Ed Madden Agnes Wojnarski
 Seth Marcus

Guest: Peter Falcone, Assistant City Administrator

OPENING ITEMS

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Central Time by Agnes Wojnarski.

Roll Call

Roll Call proceeded. All Commissioners were present. Therefore, a quorum was present.

Meeting Minutes of Regular Meeting of September 14, 2023

The minutes of the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission Board Meeting of September 14, 2023 were reviewed. No changes or corrections were noted. Therefore, the meeting minutes of September 14, 2023 were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Volunteer Workdays

A volunteer workday was planned for Sunday, September 17, 2023. However, the volunteer workday was cancelled due to heavy rain. Our plans to plant in the Slough just off of the south end of the Boardwalk near Hillside; clipping the tall Goldenrod that runs along Hillside in the buffer; mulching the Hyndman Plum Grove; and performing a general clean-up were accomplished at our volunteer workday of October 1, 2023.

All volunteer workdays continue to be heavily attended, as well as Seed Collection Wednesdays, plus seeing new volunteers in attendance.

Our Seed Collection Wednesdays will continue until November 15, 2023. However, the new hours are 4:30 to 6:15 p.m. due to shortened daylight each day.

Dana reported that currently, for this year, we have recorded over 2,300 volunteer hours. This is the most we have had in one year.

John inquired if we could divide our volunteers on the workday into two different groups to cover two different locations and accomplish more tasks. We could but we would need group leaders. Logistically, it could be challenging. We can move around a bit more and have more tasks, such as a seed collection group, planting, brush control, etc.

Prospect Heights Public Library/Park District Events

Nature Speaks Program

Dana reported that 44 people have registered to attend the Fall Nature Speaks Program on October 19, 2023 with Dr. Gerould Wilhelm. We do not know if this number is total attendance both in person and virtual. This event promises to be an interesting evening.

The webpage for the Winter Nature Speaks Program on February 22, 2024 with Kathleen Marie Garness is up and running. Kathleen was present at the October 7, 2023 volunteer workday in Grainger Woods, Mettawa, Illinois, and Dana found Kathleen to be a delightful person.

Projects – Update/Status/Commissioner Site Monitoring Reports

Site Monitoring Reports

Site Monitoring Reports are provided by each Commissioner before the meeting date. During the meeting, questions or concerns will be addressed but not the entire reading of each report.

ComEd Seeded Prairie (Dana Sievertson)

Dana said Agnes and he with two of our regular volunteers, Maja and Linda, spent most of the day on October 11, 2023 (Wednesday) at the ComEd Seeded prairie with 150 Sixth Graders from MacArthur Junior High School. A huge Shout Out to Maja and Linda.

The prairie is in a state of senescence as fall comes rushing in. The birds have made a field day of the seed and insect populations. It has been a real treat to watch the large clutches of birds that have never shown interest on this scale since we started the prairie. It has been a banner year for Biodiversity.

There is still too much Eurasian grass, and we really need to do everything we need to get the site burned again this year. Tall Goldenrods are still a problem. I have checked in with the test steward, Jeff Weiss from Buffalo Grove, to see when he will be adding the overseeding, but have not heard back yet.

Woodies are basically under control with a slight increase of Callery Pear resprouts. Fire should take care of that. A few more seed collections would be in order. Then we are at the mercy of Com Ed.

During the meeting, Seth inquired who was Weiss. Jeff Weiss is the Coordinator for the Flint Creek/Spring Creek Watersheds Partnership and Steward and leader of the Buffalo Grove Prairie Guardians. Jeff has partners with a woman, whose name Dana could not momentarily recall, to conduct a study on Tall Goldenrod at five different prairies. ComEd Seeded Prairie is one of the five prairies. Eight stakeout points with eight different treatments on Tall Golden Rod are being monitored to gauge the best way to control them. The only activity left to accomplish is seeding one of the zones and overseeding one of the other zones. Dana was requesting an update from Jeff Weiss.

Heron Pond (John Kamysz)

John reported that like our other sites, Asters and Goldenrod are in bloom. A lot of Pokeweed has grown this year, overwhelming the other plants.

The path is walkable with some overgrowth. The main grass path between the pond and the creek could use a cut.

Hillcrest Lake (John Kamysz)

John said that all is well at Pollinator Park. Nothing new to report.

John has been mowing the path.

A request was placed for a sign to explain the Solstice Garden. John's intentions are to create a sign, but progress has been delayed. John will discuss the design and cost with Dana.

Nature Preserve (Gary Morava) (Pete Hahn)

Peter visited and worked at the Nature Preserve on Monday, October 9, 2023. It was a fine morning.

Peter observed many birds migrating and singing in the Preserve. Peter also observed many Cedar Waxwings feeding on berries.

Peter said most of the plants are in seed stage. The only flowering plants were New England Asters and goldenrod. The Nature Preserve is very dense with many diverse plants. It is a battle between the sun-loving plants with a limited amount of sun.

A class of students from Morava were having a nature walk, which was good to see.

The meeting area is overgrown and in need of work. The trails are in very good condition. We only need wood chips on the west and east ends of the trail. Peter trimmed up the trail and around some of the Oak Trees.

Peter said some of the Oak Trees need work.

Remnant Prairie (Seth Marcus)

A current monitoring report was not provided.

Remnant Sedge Meadow (Jill Moskal)

Nothing new to report from the Remnant Sedge Meadow as the growing season is coming to a close. Seed collection was not conducted at the Remnant Sedge Meadow this year.

Saint Alphonsus (Ed Madden)

Ed reported that everything is going well at St. Alphonsus prairie with the annual seasonal transition in process. Ed provided a few photos with his report.

Slough (Agnes Wojnarski)

Agnes reported that the recent volunteer workdays have been focused around the Slough on the west side by Hillside and clearing buckthorn, particularly buckthorn resprouts. Seed will be put down after a prescribed burn.

Tully Park (Wendy Dewar)

Wendy Dewar commented on the 214 South Wheeling Road property. The structures are gone, the site has been graded, and topsoil and a seed cover have been placed where there is no existing grass. According to the city, the remaining item to be accomplished is to remove the very large cottonwood tree in the middle of the yard. All other trees and shrubs remain including a red birch tree, a beech tree, and two large magnolia trees.

Wendy toured Tully Park on October 7, 2023. Tully Park is in full bloom with Purple and White Asters. Some seeds have been gathered and some Canadian Goldenrod has been snipped.

Buckthorn is re-emerging in several areas.

The next seeds to be collected are Wing Stem, Boneset, and Inland Oats plus some other types of grasses are almost ready to collect seed.

Dana inquired if the fence that separates the property and Tully Park had been removed. Jill checked with Wendy and learned that the fence had been removed; however, there is no clear path between the property and Tully Park.

Seed/Greenhouse Program

Agnes reported we have many seeds and more seeds to collect.

Dana reported that the new Greenhouse structure is being installed. Dana provided a huge shout out to Mary and Spencer Watson, Seth, Monty, Linda Waycie and Norma for their assistance. This is a huge endeavor and should be completed soon.

District 214 Micro-Internship

The four Fall High School Interns' Program concludes the last week of October with the students making up a few hours. The Internship has been a rewarding and wonderful experience, and a lot of work has been accomplished.

Buffalo Grove High School Prairie Update

The expansion portion of the Buffalo Grove High School Prairie has been planted with 1,400 new plants. The students are maintaining the prairie well. The existing prairie is unbelievable. Rick was reporting students are going out in the Environmental Sciences Class. Identifying species and pollinators are present. One Dean has been taking students to the prairie to calm them down. Art Classes are conducting nature studies at the prairie. They are thrilled!

MacArthur Junior High School Prairie Project

On Wednesday, October 11, 150 Sixth Graders in two shifts (morning and afternoon) of 75 students collected and processed seed and then toured the ComEd Seeded Prairie. Volunteers Linda Waycie and Maya were present to assist Dana and Agnes.

Wheeling High School: Prairie, Classes and Visit

The Wheeling High School Prairie is having the same experience as the Buffalo Grove High School prairie. Mediha Abat, teacher and sponsor of the Wheeling High School Environmental Science Class (STEM), informed Agnes that the Zoology students were given a task to find life on the high school campus. The one area they found life was the prairie where they evaluated insects, identified pollinators, etc. Multiple disciplines are finding ways to engage with the prairie.

John Hersey High School

Dana spoke with Dave Perez, Environmental Studies teacher at John Hersey High School. One of our longer-term volunteers, Lauren, who is now a Sophomore at John Hersey High, reached out to the High School to resurrect the 2,500 square foot prairie that we prepared a few years ago. The prairie contains many prairie species but has been neglected and also now contains invasives.

Lauren arranged a meeting with us and the High School. Dave Perez is extremely interested in recreating their prairie similar to the Buffalo Grove and Wheeling High School prairies.

Dave is unavailable until the end of October and would like to come out for a visit to the Slough and see what we do. Dave desires to have something concretely established and sustainable for the students before his retirement in one year.

Prescribed Burns and Permit Renewal Update

Dana said we expect to receive confirmation of a burn permit for the 2023-2024 prescribed burn season soon.

CONTINUOUS REPORTING

NRC 2022-2023 Budget and Treasurer Report – John Kamysz

John provided Commissioners with a current copy of the City of Prospect Heights Fiscal Year 2023 – 2024 NRC Budget:

<u>Budgeted Funding:</u>		
City of Prospect Heights	\$	13,544.00
Prospect Heights Park District	\$	7,500.00
Donation Funding	\$	<u>500.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$	<u>21,544.00</u>

No new information since the last Report; same numbers.

We will need more supplies for the winter workdays because of the number of volunteers attending our volunteer workdays, such as gloves, loppers and other necessary workday items.

Hillcrest Lake Shoreline Restoration Project Budget: Restoration Expenses of Coir Logs and supplies, mulch, and plantings total \$4,895.60 leaving a Net Revenue of \$104.40. These funds will be utilized to purchase aquatic plants.

The Restoration Project Budget is \$6,000 every year, but since we were over \$1,000 in 2022, the 2023 Budget was \$5,000.

The Project plantings are robust, fantastic, and saving the shoreline of Hillcrest Lake.

City Civic Meetings and PHNRC Representation

Jill highlighted notes from the following July and August City Council and PHPD Board meetings:

CIVIC AND COMMUNITY MEETING MINUTES

City Council Regular Meeting – September 11, 2023

I was unable to attend the September 11 City Council Meeting in person but reviewed the meeting Agenda and listened to the meeting recording.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- C. R-23-23 – Resolution Authorizing Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Credit Purchase Agreement - Donnelley Prairies and Oaks Wetland Mitigation Bank, Libertyville Township, Lake County, IL**
Action Requested: (Motion, Second, Roll Call Vote)

A regulatory requirement for the City's Willow Road/Owen Street Storm Water Management Improvement is for the city to purchase compensatory wetland mitigation credits. The City is filling and excavating areas deemed as specific waters of the United States; therefore, the City must provide compensatory wetland mitigation credit as a condition of its Army Corps of Engineers permit.

The city is impacting 0.23 acres of wetland; therefore, the city is required to purchase 0.35 acres of compensatory wetland mitigation credits. This requirement is also part of the Cook County's Storm Water Management Ordinance, which is administered by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District.

This agreement and action are a prerequisite for permitting the City's partnership with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District and Cook County Department of Transportation for the Willow/Owen Flood Control Improvement.

Available area credits are at the Connelly Prairies and Oaks Wetland Mitigation Bank under the authority of Libertyville Township. The cost of the requirement is \$45,500, which is available within the project.

Update from August 28, 2023 City Council Meeting: The Chicago Executive Airport will be celebrating its 100th birthday in 2026! The Airport opened on June 1, 1926. A book will be published on this subject.

City Council Regular Meeting – September 27, 2023

I was unable to attend the September 27 City Council Meeting in person but reviewed the meeting Agenda and listened to the meeting recording.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- A.** Presentation by ML Development, of Development Plan for 506-508 Camp McDonald Road, Rezoning Property R1 to R2 and Request for Referral to Plan Commission Zoning Board

Action Requested: (Motion, Second, Roll Call Vote)

The presentation by MI Development was an introduction to a project. Discussion on this project will occur over the next six months; therefore, nothing is imminent. Per Dan Peterson, a presentation is made to the City Council and then an applicant seeks referral to the Planning Zoning Board of Appeals or PZBA. When the City Council receives a formal application, then Public Hearing Notices are issued and residents are invited to the meeting to hear the case, ask questions, provide testimony, and state their say in the public process. The PZBA will deliberate and make a recommendation to the City Council.

Tonight's presentation is the very first step of introducing a project.

Dan referred concerned citizens to the city Website, Menu Item: Code – American Legal Publishing, Title V, Zoning, Chapter 10, Administration for the process on rezoning and map amendments.

Residents are very concerned about the rezoning proposed. However, buyers with an interest in the property have a right to seek rezoning and request permission to take the next step.

The proposed redevelopment of 506 – 508 Camp McDonald Road:

DATA

Lot size:	150,453 Sf or 3.45 acres
Current Zoning	R-1
Proposed	R-2 Residential Multi-Family
Units	48 attached single family attached homes
Parking total:	204 total with 12 guest spaces 1:4.25 ratio 2 garage, 2 drive way + 12



Alderman Ward 4, Danielle Dash, formerly Chairperson of the PZBA, said she does not feel this is an infill piece. An R2 zoning is incompatible with the surrounding R1 zoning. The geometry of the site does not afford an allowance to align the buildings in a manner to mesh with the neighborhood.

This plan is aggressive. The density on this site is not appropriate.

Alderman Ward 4, Danielle Dash, said this proposal is not something she would support and recommends the development not exude a huge financial commitment to proceed and send their proposal to the Plan Commission. The current plans do not make sense. Instead, Alderman Dash recommended the developer go back to the drawing board and mee with Dan Peterson to seek other sites in our municipality that can use development.

Next Steps: The developer is going back to the drawing board. No need to take present proposal to the PZBA.

Next Meetings: The next City Council Regular Meetings are scheduled for October 9 and October 23, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall Chambers.

Prospect Heights Park District – Board Meeting of September 26, 2023

I was unable to attend the July 25 Prospect Heights Park District Board Meeting of September 26 but reviewed the meeting Agenda and meeting materials packet, as well as the minutes of the meeting provided in the September 26 meeting materials packet.

Christina Ferraro, Executive Director September 2023 Board Report

TULLY PARK (City IGA) – Demolition of 214 S. Wheeling began in September. Transitioning the property to the District is anticipated to occur by year end.

BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEMS 2023

October 2023	• Resolution Approval of IAPD credentials • Approve Ordinance issue bond
November 2023	• Approve Prescribed Burn 2023-2024 • Approve Resolution Truth in Taxation for Levy Year 2023
December 2023	• FY2024 Budget presentation • Approval of interfund transfers FY2023 • Approval of 2023 Board Meeting Schedule • Adopt Tax Levy Ordinance and Resolution

2024 BUDGET PREPARATION

Meetings have been occurring related to the 2024 budget process. We have held the Capital Meeting Budget Review, the Administrative Budget Meeting, and two budget trainings for new employees. Additional meetings are scheduled.

POP-UP ARTWALK ART SALE - On Saturday, September 30 from 10:00am-4:30pm, we will again be hosting the Pop-Up ArtWalk Art Sale at Izaak Walton Park. The event will include live music and local artists selling their handmade items.

Mark Grassi, Superintendent of Parks and Facilities September 2023 Board Report

PHNRC – On September 8th Davey Tree Company successfully applied herbicide to invasive cattail at the Slough near Izaak Walton Park by drone utilization. The NRC is currently finalizing the burn permits to apply prescription burning at the nature preserve, the Slough, Tully Park and Heron Pond. The group has also added fresh woodchips to the nature trails at Izaak Walton in preparation for their annual art sale on September 30th.

XI. New Business

- A. Approval Ordinance #09.26.2023 Tree Preservation
- B. Partner resident rates for golf daily fees

The Tree Preservation Ordinance is shown in its entirety from pages 35 – 41 of the PHPD Board Meeting Materials Packet. Below is a screenshot of the Statement of Purpose.

Ordinance No. 09.26.2023

**Tree Preservation Ordinance
Prospect Heights Park District, Cook County, Illinois**

1.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this ordinance is to provide guidance for the protection, management, removal, and replacement of trees throughout the Prospect Heights Park District.

Specific goals of this ordinance are to:

- Preserve, protect, and enhance the urban forest to ensure that trees are properly planted and maintained within the Prospect Heights Park District so that trees can protect, enhance, and preserve the quality of life for residents of the District.

Value Statement

- Prospect Heights Park District recognizes the tangible benefits that trees provide in the suburban environment. Healthy trees reduce air and noise pollution, provide energy-savings shade and cooling, furnish habitat for wildlife, enhance aesthetics and property values, and are an important contributor to community image, pride and quality of life. To protect and enhance their valuable tree resources, it is useful to view and manage trees as infrastructure, in a manner like park buildings and facilities.

Next Meeting: The Prospect Heights Park District Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Gary Morava Recreation Center in Prospect Hts., IL.

NEW INITIATIVES

Eagle Scout Project

Crafting a plan for the Eagle Scout Project is a work in progress.

A reminder to Commissioners to review the e:mail message from Dana of September 11, 2023 and entitled Planting Plans – Multiple Locations and assess what makes the most sense.

Grainger Woods Workday

As an organization, the PHNRC has tried to go to other sites to assist other programs and make a difference for one day. The COVID Pandemic somewhat dismantled that program; however, now we are looking to start it up again. We have dedicated, hard-working volunteers who accomplish a great deal, we wanted to showcase these riches and make a difference to another program, another project, another meaningful green, connective corridor.

Grainger Woods: This one is very special! It is a premier, pristine, 325-acre nature preserve located in Lake County. The Steward is Kathleen Garness.

Please join us for a volunteer workday on Saturday, October 7, 2023 at Grainger Woods from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The workday will consist of cutting and herbiciding buckthorn. One herbicider will be present for each group of three volunteers. Kathleen mentioned an opportunity exists to remove cages, collect any ripe seed, observe bird behavior, and botanize at break time. Snacks and spiced cider will be provided. Agnes and Dana will bring loppers, snips, saws, sunscreen, gloves and water. Please wear your PHNRC t-shirt. If you do not have one, Dana can supply one for your personal use.

Upon arrival at Grainger Woods, we will gather in the parking lot of Wright Woods at 9:00 a.m. and condense down to as few cars as possible. The parking loops holds 10 cars (maximum). From the parking lot of Wright Woods, we will caravan to the east side of Grainger Woods.

PHNRC contacted Kathleen earlier in the year and discussed having her as a Nature Speaks Program Speaker. Kathleen is foremost a botanical illustrator in the United States. Kathleen illustrated The Field Museum Plant Guides and the new illustrated Botanical Glossary for , the Flora of the Chicago Region by Gerould Wilhelm and Laura Rericha. Kathleen has agreed to be the February Nature Speaks Program Speaker and will be showcasing her illustrations at the February 2024 PHNRC Gallery at the library. Kathleen is a kind-hearted soul, amazing intellect, and Grainger Woods is a site that you will always remember.

A link to receive more information on Dr. Wilhelm's new testament is:
<https://sandbox.illinoisplants.org>.

Path Maintenance

Dana has developed a prospectus for the Adopt a Trail Path Maintenance initiative at our worksites. Dana will provide a copy to Commissioners before information is published in the October 2023 issue of *The Journal*.

Photographs Highlighting NRC Activities

Seth asked if we could project photographs of what we are describing, such as the Wheeling High School Prairie, onto the plasma screen during our meetings. Yes. Patrick Colvin advised us to bring the photos on a thumb drive or place the photos in either a .jpg format or Power Point presentation and send them to Peter Falcone via e:mail message prior to our meeting date.

NEW BUSINESS

PHNRC Annual Seed Processing and Volunteer Appreciation Day

Our Annual Seed Processing and Volunteer Appreciation Day will be held on Sunday, November 12, 2023. Jill will organize the pot-luck food donations. The Golden Loppers is being produced, and Dana will be picking it up soon. Commissioners discussed the start time and the majority ruled to start the day at 10:00 a.m. and conclude by 1:00 p.m.

Poplar Creek Prairie Stewards Seed Collection Days

Commissioners discussed whether or not to hold a PCPS Seed Collection Day. Due to the quantity of seed, we are collecting from our sites and the variety of species, too, we will not schedule a PCPS Seed Collection Day for the fall of 2023.

Announcements to the Public

None.

Visitors' Comments

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission is November 9, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. Central Time in City Hall Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to come before the meeting. Therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Jill E. Moskal, CPS
PHNRC Commissioner and Recording Secretary